08- ○ -0398

AN ORDINANCE BY
PUBLIC SAFETY AND LEGAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA, CHAPTER 162, VEHICLES FOR HIRE, TO PROVIDE FOR A DEFINITION OF TAXICAB SAFETY EQUIPMENT; TO REQUIRE SINAGE ON APPLICABLE TAXICABS ALERTING PASSENGERS TO THE PRESENCE OF A DIGITAL SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM; TO REQUIRE THE INSTALLATION OF TAXICAB SAFETY EQUIPMENT IN ALL TAXICABS; TO AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF OF POLICE OR HIS/HER DESIGNEE TO ESTABLISH, ISSUE, AND REVISE RULES, PROCEDURES, AND REGULATIONS TO GOVERN THE SPECIFICATIONS, INSTALLATION, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE TAXICAB SAFETY EQUIPMENT, AND TO PROVIDE FOR ENFORCEMENT OF RULES PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS; FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTING THE SAFETY OF TAXICAB DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the City of Atlanta has an interest in maintaining the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City of Atlanta and its visitors; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 1-102(c)(36) of its Charter, the City of Atlanta is authorized to regulate and license vehicles operated for hire in the city; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 98-29 of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances ("Code"), the department of police contains the bureau of taxicabs and vehicles for hire, whose functions and duties include all matters related to inspecting, licensing, and regulating taxicabs and vehicles for hire and enforcing provisions of law pertaining to such vehicles; and

WHEREAS, in the year 2006, the City of Atlanta ("City") experienced an unprecedented, four criminal assaults and one homicide, against taxicab drivers within a two week period; and

WHEREAS, in February 2006, the Taxicab Driver Safety Committee ("Committee") was established in response to these violent episodes; and

WHEREAS, the Committee was formed to conduct a comprehensive study on the personal safety of taxicab drivers operating within the City; and

WHEREAS, on January 2, 2007, the Committee released its findings in a report entitled "Taxicab Driver Personal Safety in Atlanta, GA - Final Report and Recommendations: The Report of the Taxicab Advisory Group Committee on Driver Safety to Mayor of the City of Atlanta" ("the Report") (see attached as Exhibit "A"); and

WHEREAS, the Committee's report cited studies by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health ("NIOSH) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA")

that revealed driving a taxicab is one of the most dangerous occupations in the United States (see attached as Exhibit "A"); and

WHEREAS, the Committee's principal recommendation was to mandate taxicab owners to install digital security cameras in taxicabs; and

WHEREAS, the Committee's research revealed that several large U.S. and Canadian cities have employed the installation of digital security cameras in taxicabs to reduce violent crimes against drivers (see attached as Exhibit "A"); and

WHEREAS, in the year 2003, the city of San Francisco required the installation of digital security cameras in approximately 1,400 taxicabs, and the city of Portland is currently evaluating the four principal vendors of security camera systems for installation in nearly 400 taxicabs; and

WHEREAS, the Committee found that some cities have permitted security camera systems as a substitute for safety partitions; and

WHEREAS, Committee also determined that after security camera systems were installed in Houston, San Francisco, and Winnipeg, Canada violent crime against taxicab drivers was reduced significantly; and

WHEREAS, the Committee's report cites that New York, Baltimore, and Los Angeles reported a substantial reduction in crimes against taxicab drivers after mandating the installation of bullet-resistant partitions in taxicabs; and

WHEREAS, in the year 2004, a survey of taxicab drivers showed that drivers were generally split between their support of security camera systems (48%) and bullet-resistant safety partitions (43%); and

WHEREAS, based on the Committee's findings, the Department of Police ("Department") recommends that the City mandate that all taxicab owners be required to either install digital security cameras or bullet-resistant partitions; and

WHEREAS, the Department believes the installation of either digital security cameras or bullet-resistant partitions will deter criminal assault against taxicab drivers, and provide evidentiary information needed to assist law enforcement in the event of a crime; and

WHEREAS, the Department wishes to amend Chapter 162, Article II, Division 5, Section 162 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Atlanta, Georgia for the purpose of requiring taxicab owners to either install digital security cameras or bullet-resistant partitions in taxicabs; and

WHEREAS, in order to effectively achieve the Department's objectives in regards to driver and passenger safety, the Chief of Police or his/her designee requires the authority to establish, issue and revise, as necessary, appropriate rules, procedures and regulations for the purpose of governing the specifications, installation, and maintenance of the taxicab safety equipment, and providing for the enforcement of such rules, procedures and regulations; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend Chapter 162 of the Code to accomplish these purposes; and

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA HEREBY ORDAINS, as follows:

Section 1: That Chapter 162, Article II, Division 1, Section 162-26, of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances which reads:

Section 162-26. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Bureau means the bureau of taxicabs and vehicles for hire.

Business license means the license required of any business operating within the city by chapter 30, article III.

Certificate of public necessity and convenience, CPNC means a license permitting a person to operate one vehicle for hire upon the streets of the city.

Company means any person, association, corporation or other organization operating or intending to engage in the business of operating vehicles for hire.

Company lot means the lot maintained by a company for the purpose of parking its vehicles and for other functions in the operation of the vehicle for hire business and subject to approval by the bureau of traffic and transportation.

Company permit means the application for a permit to engage in the business of operating vehicles for hire.

Contract limousine service means the rendering of limousine service by a limousine or extended limousine on a contract basis for any period in excess of 12 hours for any calendar month on hire to any one customer, regardless of whether corresponding fares or fees are collected by the limousine service from the other party contracting or from the passengers of the limousine service.

Director means the director, bureau of taxicabs and vehicles for hire.

Driver means an individual permitted to drive a vehicle for hire.

Extended limousine means a sedan-type motor vehicle capable of normally transporting no fewer than nine persons, including the driver.

Fees means nonrefundable payments required in this article.

Highways means any of the public streets, roads, boulevards, avenues, drives or alleys of the city.

Limousine means any motor vehicle that meets the manufacturer's specifications for luxury limousine with a designed seating capacity for no more than nine passengers with a minimum of five seats located behind the operator of the vehicle and which does not have a door at the rear of the vehicle designed to allow passenger entry or exit; further, no vehicle shall be permitted to be operated both as a taxicab and a limousine.

Limousine service means the service regularly rendered to the public by furnishing transportation for hire, not over fixed routes, by means of limousines or extended limousines operated by chauffeurs, on the basis of telephone contract, written contract or other prearrangement with holder of the certificate of public necessity and convenience.

Narcotic drugs, barbituric acid derivatives and central nervous system stimulants:

(1) *Narcotic drugs* means coca leaves, opium, cannabis, marijuana, isonipecaine and every synthetic substance known to have narcotic action.

(2) *Barbituric acid derivative* means each of the salts and derivatives of barbituric acid, also known as malonyl urea, and derivatives, compounds, mixtures or preparations thereof. Barbiturates include all hypnotic or somnifacient drugs, whether or not derivatives of barbituric acids.

(3) *Central nervous system stimulants* means amphetamine and desocyephedrine and any derivative, compounds, mixture or preparation thereof.

Nolo contendere is to be construed as a guilty plea and is to be considered a conviction.

Open stands means any location on the streets of this city that shall be used by any taxicab on a nonexclusive, first come, first served basis and not by private vehicles or other public conveyances.

Permit means the written authority granted to persons who qualify to drive vehicles for hire.

Sedan includes any luxury or nonluxury sedan-type vehicle which has a seating capacity of not more than five passengers and the driver and which is classified as a luxury sedan by the IRS for tax and depreciation purposes and which renders service to the public not over fixed route, operated by chauffeurs on basis of telephone or written contract.

Sedan service means a pre-arranged service regularly rendered to the public by furnishing transportation for hire, not over fixed routes, by means of sedans. Pre-arrangement

shall constitute a communicated contract prior to pick-up, evidenced by a properly completed trip sheet. The trip sheet shall include, but not be limited to, the guest's name, number of passengers to be picked up, time of pick-up, final destination, hotel room number, if applicable, and a valid contact phone number.

Taxicab means a motor vehicle used as a public conveyance, subject to this article.

Taximeter means an instrument or device attached to a vehicle and designed to measure mechanically or electronically the distance traveled by such vehicle, to record the times the vehicle travels or is in waiting and to indicate the fare to be charged.

Use of narcotic drugs applies to any person who uses one or more of the narcotic drugs or barbituric acid derivatives or central nervous stimulants as defined in this section to any extent, with or without medical need or authority or prescription.

Van means any vehicle other than a sedan-type vehicle with a designed seating capacity of not less than seven and not more than 15 passengers. Vans operating as nonemergency medical transport vehicles shall be required to obtain taxicab CPNC's and shall be subject to all regulations governing taxicabs, including vehicle requirements and fares charged.

Vehicle for hire means any motor vehicle, animal-drawn vehicle or other vehicle or device designed or used for the transportation of passengers (including, but not limited to medical patients) for hire, the charges for the use of which are determined by agreement, mileage or by the length of time for which the vehicle is engaged. Excluded from this definition are intraurban buses and vehicles exclusively regulated by the state public service commission.

be amended such as Chapter 162, Article II, Division 1, Section 162-26, of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances shall read as follows:

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Taxicab Safety Equipment **means either digital security cameras or bullet resistant partitions.**

Use of narcotic drugs applies to any person who uses one or more of the narcotic drugs or barbituric acid derivatives or central nervous stimulants as defined in this section to any extent, with or without medical need or authority or prescription.

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or by the length of time for which the vehicle is engaged. Excluded from this definition are intraurban buses and vehicles exclusively regulated by the state public service commission.

Section 2: That Chapter 162, Article II, Division 1, Section 162-36, of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances which reads:

Sec. 162-36. Information to be displayed on taxicabs.

(a) *Required.* All taxicabs shall have affixed to the exterior the following:

(1) *CPNC number,* affixed by means of permanent, nonmagnetic decals to the front left hood, the rear right trunk lid and each front fender, at least five inches in height, news gothic bold in style, with a width of at least three-eighths of an inch and black or white in color, whichever is most prominent against the background color.

(2) *Name of company,* painted or affixed by decal, according to specifications provided by the police chief, to the right and left front doors.

(3) *Schedule of rates,* painted or affixed by decal to the left and right rear doors.

(b) *Monthly insurance sticker.* Each taxicab for hire shall have affixed to the upper right corner of the front windshield a current monthly insurance sticker issued by the bureau.

(c) *Schedule of rates; identifying information.* Each taxicab shall have a schedule of passenger rights, which shall include the right to an air-conditioned cab, the right to direct the driver to use a certain route to a destination, except in a flat rate zone and an explanation of all rates and charges including flat rate fares, its CPNC number and the company's name and telephone number in addition to the bureau's telephone number for complaints and comments on the rear passenger window. The driver permit shall be three and one-half inches by five inches in size, placed in a bracket or receptacle of a type approved by the bureau and shall be located on the right half of the dash.

(d) *Logo and identification scheme.* Each company shall submit to the police chief a company logo and identification scheme which shall not be the same or similar to any other and which within ten days shall be approved or rejected. Upon approval, the company logo and identification scheme shall be affixed to each vehicle for hire in the company's fleet. The logo and identification scheme shall be affixed to the left and right front doors and any other part of the vehicle, if applicable, and shall not be less than 12 inches in height, but notgreater than 24 inches in height.

(e) *Dome light on roof.* All taxicabs shall be equipped with a dome light not less than six inches in height, permanently affixed to the roof, bearing the term "taxi" or the company name.

(f) *Advertising inside vehicle.* Any advertising material to be displayed inside the taxicab must be approved by the bureau; such approval shall not be unreasonably withheld.

(g) *Responsibility for compliance.* CPNC holders and companies shall be responsible for compliance with this section, except that drivers shall be responsible for compliance with requirements relating to display of driver permits.

be amended such as Chapter 162, Article II, Division 1, Section 162-26, of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances shall read as follows:

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(3) *Schedule of rates,* painted or affixed by decal to the left and right rear doors.

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(e) *Dome light on roof.* All taxicabs shall be equipped with a dome light not less than six inches in height, permanently affixed to the roof, bearing the term "taxi" or the company name.

(f) *Advertising inside vehicle.* Any advertising material to be displayed inside the taxicab must be approved by the bureau; such approval shall not be unreasonably withheld.

(g) *Digital Security Camera System.* All taxicabs equipped with a digital security camera in compliance with 162-120 must have affixed by decal according to specifications provided by the police chief outside of both rear doors a sign stating that images of passengers will made by the digital security camera system.

(h) *Responsibility for compliance.* CPNC holders and companies shall be responsible for compliance with this section, except that drivers shall be responsible for compliance with requirements relating to display of driver permits.

Section 3: That Chapter 162, Article II, Division 5 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Atlanta, Georgia is hereby amended by adding a new Section 162-120 which shall read as follows:

Sec. 162-120. Required Taxicab Safety Equipment

(a) Either digital security cameras or bullet resistant partitions are required to be installed in all taxicabs.

(b) Only taxicab safety equipment that has been evaluated and approved by the Department of Police shall be installed in Atlanta taxicabs.

(c) Drivers, companies, and CPNC holders shall be responsible for compliance with this section; failure to do so shall constitute due cause for the revocation or suspension of Permits, Company Permits, and CPNCs.

Section 4: Chapter 162, Article II, Division 5 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Atlanta, Georgia is hereby amended by adding a new Section 162-121 which shall read as follows:

Sec. 162-121. Specifications, Installation, and Maintenance of Taxicab Safety Equipment; Enforcement.

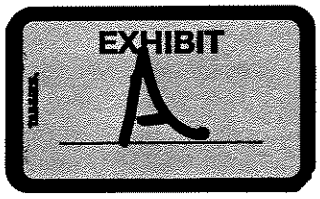
(a) The Chief of Police or his/her designee may establish and issue rules, procedures and regulations to govern the specifications, installation, and maintenance of the taxicab safety equipment and may, from time to time, revise such rules, procedures and regulations.

(b) Any such rules, procedures and regulations issued in accordance with this section shall be disseminated in writing by the Department of Police.

(c) Failure to comply with any such rules, procedures and regulations shall preclude approval of the non-compliant taxicab safety equipment by the Department of Police in accordance with Atlanta City Code § 162-120(b).

Section 5: This ordinance shall take effect six (6) months after its passage.

Section 6: All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby waived for purposes of this ordinance only, and only to the extent of the conflict.



CITY OF ATLANTA

Shirley Franklin
Mayor

818 Pollard Blvd, SW, Suite 241
Atlanta, Georgia 30315
(404) 658-7600

Atlanta Police Department
Richard J. Pennington
Chief of Police

MEMORANDUM

To: Driver Safety Committee Members

From: Director M. S. Hull

Date: 4 JAN 07

Re: Final Report and Recommendations

Attached you will find a copy of our Taxicab Driver Safety Final Report for your review. If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 4-658-7600.

Thank you and may you have a Prosperous New Year.

CITY OF ATLANTA

Shirley Franklin
Mayor

818 Pollard Blvd., SW, Suite 241
Atlanta, Georgia 30315
(404) 658-7600

Atlanta Police Department
Richard J. Pennington
Chief of Police

Taxi Stakeholders Meeting

Monday, January 22, 2007, 10:30 AM

AGENDA

I. Introduction and Purpose of Meeting

II. Driver Safety Presentation

III. Taxi Driver Appreciation Week
- March 18-25, 2007

IV. Committee to Review Implementing New Policies
- Drug Testing
- Health Physical/Screening
  a. Frequency/Policy

V. House Keeping Items
a. Drivers Violating Seating Capacity
b. Companies Moving Locations without Prior Notice
c. Discussion on Future Airport Changes

VI. Discussion

VI. Close

City of Atlanta Division of Taxicabs and Vehicles for Hire
Taxi Stakeholders Sign-In
January 22, 2007

Name	Company Affiliation	Contact Number	Email Address
1. Luis deJesus	Amigo Taxi	(4)248-0104	Colboycabdriver@AOL.com
2. ADDISU WORDOFA	UNITED EXPRESS	(4)658-1638	WORDOFA@BELLSOUTH.NET
3. ROSATO W. ICASCEMU	ATIA	770-355-8653	ATLANTA TAXI. ORG.
4. Jesse Chinye	Atlanta Taxi Ind.	4/3179017	JesseChinye@bellsouth.net
5. Sertu Abraha	American Peach	(H) 881-1715 (W) 873-1410	Georgiapeach@NetZero.Net
6. Bradley Stone	Buckhead Safety Cab Co.	4)875-7997	bhsafety@aol.com
7. Tsegaye Tekleman Iam	Yellow & Peach Taxi	4)688-8454	T-Tsegaye@AOL.Com
8. TADESSE ADEYEYE (TJ)	ALLIED NATIONS	4)373 0006	TADEYEYE@AOL.COM
9. Reginald Dreher	Kevin Ross Public Affairs	4)572 6157	rdreher@krosspa.com
10. Kevin A. Ross	Kenn Ross Public Affairs	4)572-6622	kross@krosspa.com
11. Ben Ezeoicoli	National	6)857 6041	
12. Alfred Khanna	Staff	4/758 6616	Globalshipping@bellsouth.net
13 Terry Powell	Atlanta Lenox Taxi	4/456-5718	ATLLENX@AOL.COM
14. Bobby Dagnew	U.S Taxi Cab Co	4044685550	BD@Dagnew.com
15. Edward Close	Atlanta Taxi Meter	4)872-5232	ATLANTATAXIMETER@AOL.Com
16. Fasil Muche	Crown Cab Co	4)898-0554	fasil@crowncabatlanta.net
17. Samson Abebe	Omega Taxi	(4)299-9830	Yemane1010@netzero.com
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City of Atlanta Division of Taxicabs and Vehicles for Hire
Health Screening Committee Sign-In
January 22, 2007

Name	Company Affiliation	Contact Number	Email Address
1. TAJUDEEN ADEYEYE	ALLIED [illegible]	4/373 0006	TADEYEYE@AOL.COM
2. NASAQ WARA KASUM	STAR CAB	770-355-8652	RSIC1955@AOL.COM
3. LUKE AZUBUIKE	EURO	4/373 0006	
4. Jesse Chimye	ATIA x Royal	4/317 9014	JesseChimye@bellsouth.net
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City of Atlanta Division of Taxicabs and Vehicles for Hire
Drug Testing Committee Sign-In
January 22, 2007

Name	Company Affiliation	Contact Number	Email Address
1. Fasil Muche	CROWN	4)898-0554	fasil@crownatlanta.net
2. Belay Daynew	U S TAXI	404.589.1300	B@daynew.com
3. Tsegaye Teklemariam	Yellow & Rapid	4/688-8457	TTsegaye@Aol.com
4. Jesse Chinye	AT1A, Royal	4/3179014	JesseChinye@bellsouth.net
5. RASAQ ICOSUMU	—	—	ATLANTATAXI.ORG
6. Luis Alfaro	Amigo Taxicab	(4)248-0106	Life
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TAXICAB DRIVER PERSONAL SAFETY IN ATLANTA, GA

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Report of the Taxicab Advisory Group Committee on Driver Safety to the Mayor of the City of Atlanta

January 2, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY

The Taxicab Driver Safety Committee was established in February 2006 immediately following four critical assaults and one homicide, within a two week period, of cab drivers in the metropolitan area of Atlanta. The purpose of the Committee was to conduct a comprehensive study of the taxicab driver personal safety issue and make specific recommendations for a more effective safety strategy designed to reduce taxicab crimes and driver injuries. The Committee members were drawn from within and outside the taxicab industry and included representatives from the drivers, owners, and taxicab associations; as well as the Atlanta Police Department, and the hospitality industry. The Committee met during the period February - December 2006 [see Appendix] to study different aspects of the driver safety issue.

This report by the Committee includes a thorough discussion of taxicab crime reporting, taxicab driver personal safety training, taxicab association dispatch and emergency procedures, taxicab safety equipment, and safety strategies adopted by other large cities. The report also submits detailed recommendations for a more effective safety strategy. The principal recommendations include:

- The City of Atlanta should require that each taxicab owner install an approved security camera system that meets minimum specifications promulgated separately by rule,
- The City of Atlanta should consider requiring that each taxicab owner install a "silent alarm" system to alert the dispatch office when there is an emergency,
- The City of Atlanta should encourage every taxicab owner to install a GPS tracking system so that the taxicab location can be reported to the police during an emergency[1],
- The City of Atlanta should require that each taxicab driver complete refresher training on emergency procedures and safety equipment annually,
- The City of Atlanta should authorize that taxicab drivers may refuse service if the passenger(s) are behaving in a suspicious manner [the current taxicab ordinance already authorizes drivers to refuse service whenever passengers are behaving in a threatening manner[2]].

Other recommendations address crime reporting and data collection, dispatch and emergency procedures.

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[1] Presently, approximately 85% of Seattle taxicabs have computer dispatch with GPS.

[2] See SMC 6.310.465K.2:

L. A for-hire driver shall not refuse to transport any person except when:

2. The passenger is acting in a disorderly or threatening manner, or otherwise causes the for-hire driver to reasonably believe that the for-hire driver's health or safety, or that of others, may be endangered;

BACKGROUND

There is no question that driving a taxicab is one of the most dangerous occupations. In recent years, there has been considerable discussion - and disagreement - among taxicab regulators in North American cities on how to make the workplace safer.

TAXICAB DRIVER HOMICIDES

According to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) report, *Violence in the Workplace* (1996), "[The] Taxicab services [*industry*] had the highest rate of work-related homicide during the 3-year period 1990-92 (41.4/100,000). This rate was nearly 60 times the national average rate of work-related homicides (0.70/100,000)." NIOSH stated that this represented a significant increase over the homicide rate (26.9/100,000) for the taxicab services industry for the period 1980-89.[3] An analysis of homicide rates by high-risk *occupations* indicates that the rates for the "taxicab driver/chauffeur" occupation were 15.1 per 100,000 during 1983-89 (197 homicides) and 22.7 during 1990-92 (140 homicides).[4] The NIOSH report cites information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) Program that 73%-82% of the homicides during the period 1992-94 occurred during a robbery or other crime. The NIOSH report cites FBI data that indicated that 76% of the work-related homicides were committed with firearms. Revised final counts by the Bureau of Labor Statistics using CFOI statistics for the period 1992-2001 indicate a maximum of 113 homicides (1993,1994) and a minimum of 62 (2001). The numbers trend down beginning in the second half of the 1990s.[5]

TAXICAB DRIVER NONFATAL ASSAULTS

The OSHA fact sheet, *Risk Factors and Protective Measures for Taxi and Livery Drivers* (2000), cites a U.S. Department of Justice report on workplace violence for the period 1992-1996 and concludes that, "taxi and livery drivers are also among those with the highest rates of nonfatal assault – 183.8 per 1,000 – exceeded only by police (306.0 per 1,000) and private security guards (217.8 per 1,000)".[6] A report by John R. Stone and Daniel C. Stevens, *The Effectiveness of Taxi*

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[3] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 96-100 *Violence in the Workplace* (1996)
See http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/violcont.html, Table 8.

[4] Ibid., Table 9. The homicide rate for the "taxicab driver/chauffeur" *occupation* is lower than the homicide rate for the "taxicab services *industry* because the occupation includes chauffeurs who experience few homicides.

[5] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Fatal Occupational Injuries to All Workers by Selected Characteristics 1992-2001 (Revised Final Counts)*, p. 22. For "Taxicab drivers and Chauffeurs" Occupation: 1992 (106), 1993 (113), 1994 (113), 1995 (100), 1996 (66), 1997 (100), 1998 (82), 1999 (74), 2000 (70), 2001 (62).

[6] OSHA. *Risk Factors and Protective Measures for Taxi and Livery Drivers* (May 2000).

Partitions: The Baltimore Case (June 1999), concludes that, "The results of the before/after studies show that shields reduce assaults."[7] The authors of the report recommend that, "Shields be mandated in cities that have annual assault frequencies, fleet size, and taxi services similar to Baltimore's," but they caution that, "for a city with very few violent assaults, the installation of shields may not be justified by the reduction in injury costs if there are no homicides."[8] Baltimore, with only 1,151 taxicabs, had more than 200 taxicab driver assaults each year during the period 1991-1993. Unaccountably, the number of taxicab driver assaults in Baltimore fell from 224 (1993) to 153 (1994) or 32% when only 7% of taxicabs had partitions installed. Coincidentally, during the reported on period, the authors state that there were significant decreases in factors such as population and unemployment as well as total robberies and drug arrests. As a result, the report warns that, "additional analysis is necessary to see if there was a significant statistical reduction in driver assaults as a primary result of shields and to determine what other factors may have also contributed to the reduction."[9]

The number of assaults against taxicab drivers in Baltimore may not be typical. Andrew T. Knestaut, an economist in the Office of Safety, Health and Working Conditions of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, published an article, "Fatalities and Injuries Among Truck and Taxicab Drivers" (1997), which appeared in *Compensation and Working Conditions*, and briefly discussed nonfatal assaults against taxicab drivers using CFOI data for the period 1992-95. He wrote, "Taxicab drivers had relatively few nonfatal injuries – about 1,300 in 1995; only 3 percent were due to nonfatal assaults. These figures suggest that cabdrivers would have relatively safe jobs if deadly violence did not affect their work environments."[10] Elsewhere, Knestaut elaborates, "...Cabdrivers had few nonfatal injuries, and very few of these were due to assaults. This suggests two situational extremes when cabdrivers were robbed or assaulted: (1) Drivers were not physically harmed, or (2) drivers were fatally injured."[11]

RISK FACTORS FOR VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST TAXICAB DRIVERS

Many of the factors that may increase the risk of assault in the workplace are inherent in the taxicab driver occupation. According to the NIOSH report, *Violence in the Workplace* (1996), risk factors for workplaces in general include: contact with the public; exchange of money; delivery of passengers, goods or services; having a mobile workplace such as a taxicab or police cruiser; working with unstable or volatile persons in health care, social service, or criminal justice settings; working alone or in small numbers; working late at night or during early morning hours; working in high-crime areas; guarding valuable property or possessions; and working in community-based settings.[12] Andrew T. Knestaut, an economist in the Office of Safety, Health and Working Conditions of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, published an article, "Fatalities and Injuries Among Truck and Taxicab Drivers" (1997), which appeared in

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[7] John R. Stone and Daniel C. Stevens. *The Effectiveness of Taxi Partitions: The Baltimore Case* prepared for the Southeastern Transportation Center at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (June 1999), p. 37.
[8] Ibid. "Injury costs" refers to a cost effectiveness analysis presented in the report.
[9] Ibid., p. 10.
[10] Andrew T. Knestaut. "Fatalities and Injuries Among Truck and Taxicab Drivers" *Compensation and Working Conditions* (Fall 1997), p. 55.
[11] Ibid.
[12] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 96-100 *Violence in the Workplace* (1996)

Compensation and Working Conditions, that summarized the risk factors for taxicab drivers based on CFOI data for the period 1992-95. He wrote that, "Several factors help to explain why taxicab drivers are frequent victims of [robbery]: They work alone, frequently at night, and handle cash. In addition, taxicab drivers tend to work in areas, such as inner cities, with higher crime rates."[13] According to statistics that Knestaut includes in the article, only about 26% of taxicab driver homicides occur between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. and 70% of homicides are committed by shootings. Normally, strategies recommended to reduce violent crimes against taxicab drivers focus on elimination or mitigation of these risk factors.

REDUCTION OF VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST TAXICAB DRIVERS

There is no consensus among taxicab regulators and police departments in the major U.S. cities on the most effective safety strategies to reduce of crimes against taxicab drivers that result in homicides and nonfatal assaults. Presently, NIOSH is conducting an occupational violence research project, *Evaluation of Prevention Strategies to Reduce Crime Against Taxi Cab Operators*, that is studying the effectiveness of safety partitions in Baltimore and video surveillance camera systems in Houston.[14] NIOSH expects to conclude the project in 2005 and issue a report.

A study by Dana Loomis et al., *Effectiveness of Safety Measures Recommended for Prevention of Workplace Homicide* (2002), which was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, examined workplaces in high risk industries (including taxicabs but predominately convenience stores) in North Carolina during 1994-98 to investigate the effectiveness of administrative and environmental interventions for preventing homicides in the workplace. The study found that elimination of working alone at night and the use of bright exterior lighting reduced the risk of homicides but other interventions were not effective. For example, "...(O)ther recommended or legally required interventions, including improved visibility of the work area from outside, video surveillance cameras, observation mirrors, posted notices of limited cash on hand, and training to prepare workers for robberies, did not appear to be effective in preventing robbery-related homicides..."[15]

The effectiveness of steps to reduce crimes against drivers, other than the installation of security camera systems and safety partitions, is illustrated by the remarks of John R. Stone, author of the Baltimore partitions study, a few years earlier at a Taxi Driver Security Conference in Montreal. Stone observed that, after a taxicab driver murder in 1990, the Taxi Bureau organized a roundtable including the taxicab industry, police, and other agencies and implemented safety programs including: flashing rear emergency lights and priority for 911 taxi calls, media coverage and rewards for taxicab driver assailants, police spot inspections of taxicabs and passengers, and a training video for drivers on taxicab driver safety. He stated, "Between 1990 and 1995, as a result of Round Table efforts, the number of [Montreal] taxi robberies fell

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[13] Andrew T. Knestaut. "Fatalities and Injuries Among Truck and Taxicab Drivers" *Compensation and Working Conditions* (Fall 1997), p. 55.

[14] See: http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/injury/traumaviol_taxi.html.

[15] Dana Loomis, Stephen W. Marshall, Susanne H. Wolf, Carol W. Runyan, and John D. Butts. "Effectiveness of Safety Measures Recommended for Prevention of Workplace Homicide" *The Journal of the American Medical Association* Vol. 287, No. 8 February 27, 2002. See: http://jama.ama-assn.org.

dramatically by 60% from 187 annual armed robberies to 76. Furthermore, relations between taxi drivers, the police, and the community improved."[16]

NIOSH discusses prevention strategies in three categories: environmental designs, administrative controls, and behavioral strategies. Environmental designs include cash-handling practices, physical separation between workers and the public, improved visibility and lighting, cameras, and alarms. The NIOSH report, *Violence in the Workplace* comments specifically on environmental design and taxicabs – "It may also be useful to explore the feasibility of cashless transactions in taxicabs and retail settings through the use of machines that accommodate automatic teller account cards or debit cards."[17] John R. Stone and Daniel C. Stevens, in *The Effectiveness of Taxi Partitions: The Baltimore Case*, agree but caution that these steps won't prevent assaults against taxicab drivers – "Methods such as the use of credit cards for fares, automatic vehicle location (AVL), in-vehicle cameras and silent alarms are solutions that have the potential to protect drivers. Yet none separate the driver from physical threat." [18] Ironically, the Baltimore study illustrates that even bullet-resistant safety partitions don't always protect drivers from physical threats. In 1997, the second year after 100% of the taxicabs had installed safety partitions, there were two taxicab driver homicides in Baltimore – the first homicides in four years.[19] Administrative controls refers to work practices. In the taxicab industry, administrative controls might include dispatch and emergency procedures. Finally, behavioral strategies include training in conflict resolution, training to raise awareness of risks of workplace violence, and training in the use of protective equipment. Some prevention strategies help deter crimes against taxicab drivers, others help protect drivers from injury, and still others help the police find the assailants. OSHA neatly summarizes this situation as follows: "There is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution. A number of measures may help reduce the risks encountered by taxi and livery drivers. Improving safety for drivers will require the efforts and commitments of vehicle owners, drivers, service providers, law enforcement agencies, regulatory officials, and local government regulators. A number of strategies are being tried, but the deterrent effect of many of these is unknown. Some may not prevent injury but may speed response time when an incident occurs."[20]

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[16] John R. Stone. "Taxi Driver Security" Remarks prepared for the Taxi Driver Security Conference sponsored by the Security Committee of the Montreal Urban Community Taxi Bureau (December 6, 1996).
[17] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 96-100 *Violence in the Workplace* (1996), "Risk Factors and Prevention Strategies".
[18] John R. Stone and Daniel C. Stevens. *The Effectiveness of Taxi Partitions: The Baltimore Case* prepared for the Southeastern Transportation Center at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (June 1999), p. 38.
[19] Ibid., p. 10. Table 2.3 "Taxi Shield and Baltimore Crime Data" The homicides during the period of the study were: 1991 (2), 1992 (1), 1993 (1), 1994 (0), 1995 (0), 1996 (0), 1997 (2).
[20] OSHA. *Risk Factors and Protective Measures for Taxi and Livery Drivers* (May 2000).

Taxicab Driver Homicides & Assaults in Georgia from January 1, 1984 to January 2, 2007

Driver's Name	Cab Company	Injured by way of..	Fatal or Non-fatal	Month of Incident	Year of Incident	Investigating Entity
Nathan Bernard Conley	Unknown	Unknown	fatal	Unknown	1984	unknown
William Claude Strickland	unknown	robbed @ gunpoint & handcuffed to tree	non-fatal	April	1985	Hall County
Woody S. Wyatt	City Wide	Shooting	non-fatal	November	1985	Unknown
Walter Lewis Brown	Checker	Shooting & arson	fatal	May	1986	Atlanta
Steven Troy Foley	Unknown	Stabbing	fatal	May	1986	DeKalb
Marvin Aaron Rabun	Unknown	Shooting	fatal	July	1987	Atlanta
Calvin McCaslin	Ashby Street	Shooting	fatal	May	1987	Atlanta
Unknown	London Cab Co.	Shooting	fatal	July	1988	Atlanta
Jessie Lee Snowden	Unknown	Shooting	fatal	July	1988	Atlanta
Thomas George	London Cab Co.	Shooting	fatal	April	1989	Atlanta
Steve Trammell	Day & Night	Shooting	fatal	June	1989	East Point
Okpani Oruada	London Cab Co.	Shooting	fatal	October	1989	Atlanta
Glyndon Marshall	Day & Night	Unknown	fatal	May	1989	East Point
Bobby McDaniel	Day & Night	Unknown	fatal	April	1989	unknown
Edmond Mekwuye	Victory	Shooting	fatal	December	1989	Cobb County
Unknown	Rapid	Shooting	fatal	October	1992	Atlanta
Robert Bishop Jr.	Rapid	Shooting	non-fatal	February	1992	Fulton County
James Edwards Gates	Ealy Taxi	Shooting	fatal	August	1993	unknown
Mattie Louise Bray	69 Cab Co.	unknown	fatal	April	1994	DeKalb
Charles Edward Williams	Rapid	Shooting	fatal	August	1994	unknown
Ikemefula Nwaobia	Decatur Yellow	Shooting	fatal	November	1994	East Point
Melvin Kemp	Unknown	Shooting	fatal	March	1994	DeKalb
Jessie Wesley	Unknown	Shooting	fatal	January	1994	College Park
Stephen Edafe Oghweh	Metro Taxi	Shooting	fatal	January	1994	Norcross
Edward Hartsfield	Metro Taxi	Shooting	fatal	July	1994	DeKalb
Kunle Baldgun	Metro Taxi	Shooting	fatal	July	1995	Gwinnett
Arlington Andrews	Victory	Shooting	fatal	May	1995	Cobb County
Adekunle Balogun	Metro Taxi	Shooting	fatal	Unknown	1995	unknown
Emmanuel Abdo	Unknown	Shooting	non-fatal	June	1996	Union City
Mesfin Debouch	Decatur Express	Shooting	non-fatal	May	1997	Atlanta
Unknown	Unknown	Robbed @ gunpoint	non-fatal	November	1997	Fulton County
Eduardo Iglesias	Paisanos Taxi	Shooting	fatal	August	1998	Atlanta
Unknown	unkown	face slashed	non-fatal	November	1998	Gwinnett
Jose Manuel Mendoza	Unknown	Robbed @ gunpoint	non-fatal	November	1999	Clayton County
Pedro Huerta	Tommy Star	Shooting	fatal	May	2000	Forest Park
Unknown	Unknown	Choked	non-fatal	May	2000	Gwinnett
Berhe Gebreheiwet	Ambassador	Shooting	fatal	June	2000	Atlanta
Segundo Tenelema	unknown	Shooting	fatal	May	2000	DeKalb
Tony Ehigie	Checker	Shooting	fatal	April	2001	Atlanta
Syed Ali	Nations Cab	Shooting	fatal	February	2002	Forsyth County

Driver's Name	Cab Company	Injured by way of..	Fatal or Non-fatal	Month of Incident	Year of Incident	Investigating Entity
Ramona Antonia Agramontes	Astro	Shooting	fatal	July	2003	Cobb County
Aldolfo Alvarez	unknown	shooting	fatal	March	2003	Cobb County
John Barker	Unknown	Shooting	fatal	April	2004	Chatham County
David Roberts	Decatur's Best	Shooting	non-fatal	July	2005	DeKalb
Unknown	Diamonds Cab	Shooting	fatal	February	2006	Fulton County
Unknown	Mexi-Car	Shooting	non-fatal	January	2006	Atlanta
Berhanu Yassin	Rapid	Shooting	fatal	September	2006	DeKalb
Amanuel Abunaw	Yellow	Shooting	fatal	October	2006	unknown
Unknown	Hispano American	Shooting	fatal	December	2006	DeKalb

STUDY

The Committee conducted its study of taxicab driver safety during biweekly meetings that each concentrated on a different topic: published research by subject matter experts, taxicab crime reporting and statistics, taxicab dispatch and emergency procedures, taxicab driver personal safety training, taxicab safety equipment and taxicab safety strategies adopted in other large cities. Collectively, these topics are considered to represent the various aspects of a comprehensive safety strategy.

PUBLISHED RESEARCH

The Committee reviewed published studies by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) as well as research published by nongovernmental sources.[21] The following studies are most often cited by researchers who study taxicab driver personal safety:

Andrew T. Knestaut. "Fatalities and Injuries Among Truck and Taxicab Drivers" *Compensation and Working Conditions*, Fall 1997, pp. 55-60

Occupational Safety and Health Administration. *Risk Factors and Protective Measures for Taxi and Livery Drivers* (May 2000), 2 pp.

Dana Loomis et al. "Effectiveness of Safety Measures Recommended for Prevention of Workplace Homicide" *The Journal of the American Medical Association,* Vol. 287, No. 8, February 27, 2002, 10 pp.

National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). *Violence in the Workplace* DHHS(NIOSH) Publication No. 96-100 (1996)

John R. Stone and Daniel C. Stevens. *The Effectiveness of Taxi Partitions: The Baltimore Case* (June 1999), 42 pp.

NIOSH. Occupational Violence Research Project: "Evaluation of Prevention Strategies to Reduce Crime Against Taxi Cab Operators" (announcement)

Bureau of Labor Statistics. Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries 1992-2001 (extract)

[21] The general conclusions of these studies have already been discussed in the BACKGROUND portion of this report.

Strategy of the Seattle Police Department

TAXICAB CRIME REPORTING AND STATISTICS. The Seattle Police Department (SPD) has historical taxicab crime statistics for the period 2000-2004 and the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) has historical statistics for the period 1999-2004. The Port Police at Sea-Tac Airport report that they have no record of robberies or assaults against taxicab drivers during the previous 6-7 years. The completeness and accuracy of the police statistics on crimes against taxicab drivers is questionable for several reasons: (1) taxicab drivers often don't report crimes to the police[22]; (2) taxicab drivers often don't report crimes to their taxicab associations; (3) police officers may not identify a victim as a taxicab (i.e., optional field, data not entered consistently) so crimes against taxicab drivers cannot be reported from police databases; (4) police records may double count one crime as both a robbery and an assault; and (5) all crimes involving taxicabs are combined (e.g."run outs", crimes by drivers on other drivers or passengers) in police databases. Despite this, crime statistics are helpful in defining the nature and scope of the driver safety problem in Seattle and King County.

The SPD Crimes Analysis Unit published a memorandum, "Taxi Cab Related Offenses", dated April 20, 2004 with charts and maps showing the location of crimes committed during the period 2000-2003 [see Appendix to this report] that involved taxicab drivers as either victims or suspects in homicides, armed robbery, strong arm robbery (no weapon), simple assault, and aggravated assault (with weapon).

YEAR	TOTAL CRIMES 1/	CLEARANCE RATE 2/
2000	61	15/61 (25%)
2001	75	29/75 (38%)
2002	61	16/61 (26%)
2003	65	16/65 (25%)

Notes: 1/ Total crimes includes taxicab drivers as either victims or suspects: 2000 – 50 victims/11 suspects, 2001 – 57/18, 2002 – 43/18, 2003 – 56/9. 2/ Clearance rate is the percent of crimes where an arrest is made (does not refer to convictions).

The SPD charts break down information about these crimes for the most recent 13 1/2-month period, January 1, 2003 – February 15, 2004 3/:

Crimes by Type	Crimes	Crimes by Sector	Most Crimes
Homicide:	1 (1%)	Homicide:	Robert (1)
Armed Robbery 4/:	13 (19%)	Robbery:	George (6), Robert (3)
Strong Arm Robbery:	3 (4%)	Assaults:	King (7), Mary (7)
Aggravated Assault:	14 (21%)		
Simple Assault:	37 (54%)	Day of Week	Most Crimes
Total	68	Robbery:	Fri (4.4)
		Assault:	Wed (11)

[22] The results of a survey of crimes against taxicab drivers conducted during March-May 2004 indicate that 78% of robberies and 55% of assaults are reported by the taxicab driver to the police.

Note: 3/ Information taken from charts and maps provided by SPD. 4/ Robbery statistics don't include "run outs", or passengers who fail to pay fares, which are considered by SPD to be crimes of theft.

The majority of taxicab robberies occur in the Central Area and the majority of assaults against taxicab drivers occur downtown. The location of the assaults is probably related to the presence of clubs and bars downtown. The clearance (arrest) rate for taxicab robberies and assaults in Seattle is approximately the same as the clearance rate for all robberies and assaults – in the range of 25-40%. Most crimes against taxicab drivers in Seattle occurred during hours of darkness.

YEAR	6PM-6AM	ASSAULTS	ROBBERIES
2000	82%	34	15
2001	71%	37	17
2002	77%	36	11
2003	75%	33	14

A review of King County taxicab crimes indicates that three quarters occurred during evening or early morning hours (6P-6A); robberies (8) were most common followed by carjackings (6), threats (5), assaults (3) and road rage (1). If a weapon was used it was a gun and just one crime resulted in injuries to the driver.

SPD contacted comparable cities (similar population) – Nashville, TN; Denver, CO; Omaha, NE; Forth Worth, TX; and Washington, DC – but none of them tracked taxicab crimes except for Washington, DC. Presently, SPD can't release information on taxicab driver injuries as the result of crimes because of the Health Information Privacy Protection Act 2004 (HIPPA) that prohibits the release of medical information on individuals. Even though drivers report more injuries with assaults, robberies are generally committed with a weapon and the potential for serious injury is greater.

Experience with convenience store robberies in Seattle indicates that posted signs stating that only a small amount of cash is on hand are not effective in preventing these crimes even though the take is usually small (e.g., $100-$150). Moreover, most conveniences stores have surveillance cameras and they do not appear to be a deterrent but that they do assist with the crime investigation.

Comments in the driver survey indicate that there is a general belief that it often takes a long time for SPD to show up after a crime is committed. Police are dispatched using a priority of #1 (highest) to #8. Crimes in progress are #1 and are immediate dispatch. The average SPD response time for a priority #1 is four (4) minutes.

A Service Information Report is required to be submitted quarterly by each taxicab association representatives and, beginning with April-June 2003, the report form was amended to ask for

information on robberies and assaults against drivers. No information has been submitted so far. Taxicab association representatives claim that drivers have not reported crimes to them.[23]

RISK FACTORS

There are several reasons to review taxicab crime statistics: (1) determine the nature and scope of the threat to driver personal safety; (2) compare trends in crime rates before and after safety strategies are implemented in order to assess their effectiveness; and (3) identify risk factors so that effective safety strategies can be developed.

The general risk factors applicable to the taxicab industry were discussed in the BACKGROUND portion of this report and are adequately addressed in the published studies. Some of the obvious risk factors for individual taxicab trips – or characteristics that are disproportionately represented – include the time of day; geographical location (for Seattle taxicab crimes); lease driver v. owner-driver; and driver experience. Nearly all robberies and assaults occur in the evening or early morning hours during the second shift. Many drivers working the second shift are new, inexperienced drivers - most of the taxicab drivers who are crime victims have only 1-3 years of driving experience.[24] Finally, the SPD statistics indicate that the majority of crimes are committed in two geographical areas – downtown and the Central Area (just east of downtown).

The fact that nearly all taxicab crimes occur during the second shift could be attributable to many factors including: (1) new drivers usually start on the less desirable (fewer trips) night shift; (2) lease drivers drive night shift more than owner-drivers; (3) night shift drivers may be fatigued and it could impair their judgment about whether a trip is suspicious; (4) there are fewer fares at night and drivers may take trips that they otherwise might not; (5) the bar/club crowd is taking taxicabs and drugs or alcohol could be a factor (esp. regarding assault); and (6) in the early morning the shifts are ending and drivers will have the most cash. It may be impossible to give appropriate weight to these factors individually.

Other trip characteristics that don't appear to be risk factors because they are proportionately represented in crime statistics include: taxicab association; dispatch vs. stand/hail trips; computer v. radio dispatch trips; dispatch v. no dispatch trips (e.g. STITA); number of passengers; and the city where the crime occurred.

SPD crime statistics and safety statistics published by federal agencies are normally presented in terms of crimes or injuries per 100,000 population. If the risk of taxicab driver homicides in Seattle was calculated in this manner it would be very small since approximately 3,000,000 trips are provided by taxicabs annually and there was 7 years between the last two homicides. Even the risk of robbery or assault would appear to be very small: 3,000,000 paid trips ÷ 80 crimes = 1 crime : 37,500 trips. [25] However, if the risk was calculated as a percentage of taxicab drivers that would be victims/suspects in a given year it would appear to be much more significant: 80

[23] The results of a survey of crimes against taxicab drivers conducted during March-May 2004 indicate that 56% of robberies and 45% of assaults are reported to the taxicab association according to drivers.
[24] The results of a survey of crimes against taxicab drivers conducted during March-May 2004 indicate that 68% of drivers who reported being victims of robberies and assaults had 0-3 years experience operating a taxicab.
[25] Assumes 60 crimes reported annually + 20 not reported to SPD – a conservative estimate.

crimes ÷ 1,400 Seattle drivers X 100 = 6%. Further, the risk to second shift drivers would be higher still because only about one-half as many taxicabs operate then but ¾ of the crimes occur during that shift.

What is uncertain, is whether there is a clear link between robberies and driver injuries. The question asked in the driver survey is poorly worded and, as a result, the survey results are ambiguous on the subject of driver injuries. The results of the driver survey indicate that a driver is nearly twice as likely to be injured during an assault than during a robbery.[26] This means that safety strategies designed to reduce robberies may not be very effective in reducing injuries.

SPD counts robberies and assaults that occur during the same incident as two crimes and that could result in some double counting of crimes. By contrast, the FBI uses a hierarchy of offenses to count an incident with both a robbery and assault as just a robbery.

There is considerable anecdotal evidence that taxicab assaults are probably underreported because drivers cannot make a living if they spend hours at the police precinct doing paperwork. Crime statistics may also be underreported because many drivers quit after they are victims of crimes.

DISPATCH AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The Committee observed call taker and dispatch procedures used by Puget Sound Dispatch [Yellow Cab]. Call takers answer the telephone by asking for the caller's area code and telephone number. They enter this information in the computer and full customer information is displayed. The call taker verifies the information then enters the trip in the dispatch computer. If the caller does not have a telephone number, the call taker asks for a landmark (e.g., hotel). If the address given is not a valid address (in the computer database) then the trip goes to the dispatch supervisor who notifies the caller that Yellow Cab will not service the call. No taxicabs will be sent to an intersection or a pay phone (except in Safeway, etc.) because these calls are considered suspicious.

Drivers may send a maximum of two call outs per trip - an automated phone call to the caller stating that, "Your taxi has arrived". Puget Sound Dispatch has established a maximum distance that a call out can be sent by drivers in order to avoid having callers report no taxicab and ask for another to be dispatched.

There was considerable discussion about whether call takers should obtain one of the following for all apartment service requests: (1) apartment number, (2) security gate access code, or (3) caller's last name. It is believed that some callers simply won't provide this information because they are worried about personal safety. If this information is required, taxicab associations will probably lose the business to other transportation services. There is considerable anecdotal evidence that a lot of women living alone don't wish to give out this information and many people are worried about identity theft. Also, people going to the airport

[26] The results of a survey of crimes against taxicab drivers conducted during March-May 2004 indicate that 41% of drivers report that they were injured during a robbery while 70% of drivers report that they were injured during an assault. The survey question should have asked the driver to indicate the nature of the injuries and whether the driver required medical treatment, required hospitalization, missed work, etc.

don't want drivers knowing where they live when they are leaving town and their apartments will be empty. Finally, many callers don't want to give out their phone numbers because they think drivers will have this information [even though they don't]. Fewer than 2% of Yellow Cab trips are "no phone" trips (not counting landmark trips). For example, in March 2004, there were approximately 2,500 "no phone" trips or just 1.5% of 167,000 trips dispatched.

Puget Sound Dispatch [Yellow Cab] demonstrated driver emergency procedures for the Committee using their DDS computer dispatch/GPS system. When a taxicab driver believes that there is a threat to his personal safety from passengers, he may use his mobile data terminal (MDT) to alert the dispatcher. The GPS computer monitor displays the sending taxicab on an electronic map in the center of the screen with an arrow indicating direction of travel, speed and the number of the taxicab. This display updates continuously. The dispatch supervisor's work station shows the emergency and provides information on the identity of the driver. When the dispatcher receives an emergency message, he immediately reauthorizes the MDT in the sending taxicab (it is automatically de-authorized by the emergency message) and asks the driver to shift to radio so that dispatchers can determine if there is an actual emergency or a false alarm. If the taxicab does not respond on the radio, dispatchers call 911 and inform SPD of the exact location of the taxicab so police officers may provide assistance to the driver. This entire procedure is accomplished in minutes.

During March 2004, Yellow Cab dispatched 167,000 trips and there were 76 emergency messages sent. Fully 62 of the 76 emergency messages were false alarms, 8 others were due to electrical problems, and 6 messages were actual emergencies that resulted in 3 SPD cases. Most emergency false alarms originate in the Yellow Cab lot, at the meter shop, or at the driver's home and often the dispatcher can quickly tell if this is the case. Often, drivers send a emergency false alarm by making errors while entering a general message.

Taxicab drivers can send two general messages to dispatchers to ask for assistance. For instance, general message 33 is "possible dangerous passenger/cancel call". Drivers can send this message after arriving at the passenger pickup location if they determine that there is a possible threat to their safety. The driver who sends this message won't be de-authorized or put at the bottom of the queue for that zone as would happen if the driver simply dumped a trip. During March 2004, there were 35 of these messages sent and 19 were determined to be false by a passenger call back and were subsequently re-dispatched. The other 16, canceled by dispatch, were mostly early morning calls.

On March 24, 2004, Yellow 392 sent general message 57 "call police/use my GPS" after a couple of passengers picked up at a motel on the Pacific Highway told the driver they had a gun and would shoot the driver if he didn't take them to Ballard. This message went to the dispatch supervisor's work station and he phoned SPD. SPD met the taxicab in Ballard and arrested the passengers.

TAXICAB DRIVER PERSONAL SAFETY TRAINING

Originally, the driver personal safety training was only scheduled for 1 hour and the Professional Drivers Course was just 1 day in duration. In 1997, the driver personal safety training was increased to 2-3 hours when the course was expanded to 2 days. Subsequently, the driver

personal safety training was reduced to 1-1/2 hours when Seattle and King County taxicab inspectors were added to the course as speakers a couple years ago. Some information on driver personal safety is interspersed throughout the course and especially in the "Defensive Driving" module [National Safety Council (NSC) DDC-4] that addresses the topic of 'road rage.'

The 15-page student handbook "Customer Relations/Driver Safety" [see Appendix] includes a section devoted to driver personal safety on pages 11-15. A 5-minute video on driver personal safety produced by the Boston Police Department is used in the module. The video includes a vignette demonstrating proper safety procedures for taxicab drivers including: (1) make eye contact with passenger, (2) make small talk with passenger, (3) put passenger on right side of the rear seat for visibility, (4) tell passenger to wait inside the building until the taxicab arrives, and (5) don't get out of the taxicab and keep doors locked until the passenger walks up.

It is emphasized that new drivers are most often victims of robberies and assaults. One reason may be that they often work long hours to earn more and they may become less alert or short tempered. Some new drivers engage in risky behavior by operating in areas where there are known drug dealers or other potentially dangerous passengers. Instructors for the Professional Driver Course believe that you can't teach common sense and instincts but a driver needs them to be safe. Some passengers can be abusive but the driver should not confront them. Instead, the driver should remain silent, finish the trip, and get the passenger out of the taxicab as soon as possible. Bad traffic can make drivers lose patience – especially when time is money and when the customer is complaining about delays.

The instructors for the Professional Driver Course believe that the 2-day course is too short to teach a lot of specifics. They teach general ideas such as using a map as opposed to finding specific addresses. Drivers are encouraged to learn lessons from their experiences. The consensus of the Committee members was that the driver personal safety topic cannot be adequately covered in 1-1/2 hours. Often, drivers only want to learn what is on the test. It is estimated that the cost of a separate ½-day or 1-day course on driver personal safety would be approximately $25 since the 2-day Professional Drivers Course fee was set at $50 for 100% cost recovery. It was proposed that SPD teach part of the safety course in order to help establish a rapport with taxicab drivers so that they will be more likely to report crimes. The instructors recommended that defensive driving training be included in the safety course because it wears off and the city requires its employees to take the training every two years. They believe that the "road rage" portion is particularly important.

The instructors commented that the city Taxicab Code does not have enough flexibility for drivers to refuse trips and that drivers need to use their instincts to refuse trips even if the passengers are not behaving in a threatening manner.

Yellow Cab uses an 8-page handout, "Taxicab Driver Safety," as part of their 1-week taxicab association training course for new drivers.

The results of the recent "Survey of Crimes Against Taxicab Drivers" indicate that 75% of survey respondents stated that they had received driver personal safety training during both the

1-week taxicab association training course and the 2-day Professional Drivers Course. Approximately 50% of the respondents requested more driver personal safety training in the 1-week taxicab association training course and 35% of the respondents requested more driver personal safety training in the 2-day Professional Drivers Course. About one-third of the respondents requested that SPD help conduct safety training.

TAXICAB SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Approximately 48% of Seattle and King County taxicab drivers responding to the recent safety survey favor the installation of security camera systems and 43% favor the installation of bullet resistant safety partitions.

During the past five years, several large U. S. and Canadian cities have required the installation of security camera systems in taxicab fleets in order to reduce violent crimes against drivers. Most recently, San Francisco (2003) installed security camera systems in nearly 1,400 taxicabs. Portland (late 2004) is evaluating the four principal vendors of security camera systems in North America and will select one for installation in nearly 400 taxicabs later this year. Vancouver, BC requires camera installations by the beginning of 2005. The Clark County (Las Vegas, NV) Taxicab Authority is conducting a 1-year study of the effectiveness of security camera systems in reducing violent crimes against taxicab drivers prior to requiring them in 1,900 taxicabs in southern Nevada. There is a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) occupational violence research project, *Evaluation of Prevention Strategies to Reduce Crime Against Taxi Cab Operators*, which will evaluate the effectiveness of bullet-resistant partitions in Baltimore and video surveillance cameras in Houston in reducing risk of injuries, assaults and homicides to taxicab drivers.

In some cities, security camera systems are permitted as a substitute for safety partitions ("shields") and some regulators consider security camera installations to be a complement to GPS dispatch systems in taxicabs for driver personal safety. The price range for security camera systems is $400-$550 and installation costs add another $100-$150. Only one city has provided funding for the initial purchase of security camera systems [Portland] while most others have required the taxicab industry to pay these costs [San Francisco] or have temporarily added a taximeter surcharge to help reimburse the costs [Vancouver, Winnipeg].

Security camera systems are too new in the taxicab industry for there to be published studies that prove their effectiveness either as a deterrent or in identifying and arresting suspects. Initial reports from Houston, San Francisco, and Winnipeg indicate a significant decrease in crimes against drivers after security camera systems were installed.

Several large cities require safety partitions in taxicabs including New York, Baltimore, and Los Angeles. They all report significant reductions in serious crimes against taxicab drivers as a result. Winnipeg requires half-shields which protect the driver seat only but they are not popular with drivers.

In recent years, it appears that security camera systems are replacing safety partitions as the preferred safety equipment in taxicabs. Only Winnipeg requires both. Generally, it seems that

taxicab drivers prefer security camera systems over safety partitions for several reasons: (1) there is a perception that safety partitions reduce tips by isolating the driver from the passenger(s) and presenting a physical barrier to communication; (2) a safety partition prevents the use of the front seat for passengers so no more than 3 passengers can be transported in a sedan; (3) a safety partition prevents the adjustment of the driver seat for taller drivers; (4) a safety partition reduces leg room for passengers on the rear seat; and a safety partition interferes with air circulation (i.e., heating, air conditioning) for passengers in the rear seat. Some regulators favor security camera systems over safety partitions because they believe that security camera systems are more "tourist friendly" because they don't interfere with communication with the driver and don't make the ride uncomfortable for the passenger.

TAXICAB DRIVER SAFETY SURVEY RESULTS

SURVEY OF CRIMES AGAINST TAXICAB DRIVERS. The survey questionnaire was mailed to approximately 2,500 active Seattle and King County taxicab drivers during March-April 2004. The return rate for survey questionnaires was about 10%.

NUMBER OF CRIMES. Approximately 12% of taxicab drivers completing the survey questionnaires reported that they had been the victims of robberies sometime while operating a taxicab and 9% indicated that they had been the victims of assaults.

TIME OF CRIMES. Nearly 96% of robberies and 83% of assaults occurred during the evening or early morning hours (6:00 p.m.-6:00 a.m.).

LOCATION OF CRIMES. Approximately 67% of robberies and 89% of the assaults occurred in Seattle.

TRIP TYPE. Almost 63% of taxicab robberies were stand/hail trips even though these trips generally account for just 30% of all trips. For assaults, stand/hail crimes are proportional to stand/hail trips.

INJURIES. Injury data is not reliable because the survey questionnaire did not ask the type of injury, whether the injury required medical treatment, or if there was lost work due to the injury. However, almost 41% of drivers reported being injured during a robbery and 74% during an assault.

WEAPON. Slightly more than 70% of robberies involved a gun or knife but only 15% of assaults.

DRIVER TYPE. Lease drivers comprised nearly 89% of drivers who were robbed and 79% of drivers who were assaulted.

DRIVER EXPERIENCE. Nearly 37% of drivers were victims of robberies or assaults during their first year driving taxicabs and more than 68% of the drivers were victims during the first 3 years.

DRIVER TRAINING. Approximately 75% of drivers reported receiving driver personal safety training in both the 1-week taxicab association training program and the 2-day city/county Professional Driver Course. Roughly half of the drivers recommend more training and about one-third think that the Seattle Police Department should help develop/deliver this training.

SUSPECTS. There was only 1 suspect in 52% of the robberies and 67% of the assaults.

REPORTING CRIMES TO POLICE. Drivers reported nearly 78% of robberies to the police and 58% of assaults. This seems to contradict a general opinion among drivers that few crimes are reported to the police.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT PREFERENCE. Drivers are generally split between support of security camera systems (48%) and bullet-resistant safety partitions (43%). There is also strong support for silent alarms (34%), emergency rooftop lights (33%), GPS tracking/dispatch (32%), and better emergency procedures by dispatchers (30%).

RISK FACTORS. Based on the driver survey, the most significant risk factor is time of day. Approximately 90% of all crimes reported (where the time of day was known) occurred during the evening shift or approximately 6:00 p.m.-6:00 a.m. Only about half as many taxicabs operate during the evening shift compared with the day shift which makes the disproportionality even more pronounced. Another risk factor may be that robberies are more likely with stand/hail trips. Finally, new drivers are much more likely to be victims of crimes than experienced drivers. This factor can probably be addressed with improved driver personal safety training.

CASE HISTORIES OF TAXICAB SAFETY EQUIPMENT

The following case histories describe the experiences of other large cities – some taxicab regulators have required safety partitions, other have required security camera systems, and still others have not required either.

CASE HISTORY: PORTLAND

Taxicabs: 382 Drivers: 650

The Portland City Council passed Ordinance No. 177794 on August 13, 2003 that amended Chapter 16.40 of the Code to require the installation of digital security camera systems in all taxicabs. The ordinance established a Private For Hire Transportation Safety Fund (Safety Fund) to pay for the initial purchase and installation of the security camera systems. The Safety Fund dollars are a loan from the General Fund that will be repaid over a period of 7-8 years by sizeable increases in taxicab permit fees [from $100 to $155] and taxicab driver permit fees [from $30 to $60].

The Private For Hire Transportation Board of Review [Board] administers the Safety Fund by approving grants to taxicab companies. The city regulators will select the security camera system based on specifications, evaluation of image quality and comparison of prices. To establish the specifications, Portland taxicab regulators conducted a needs analysis by consulting with the city prosecutor, city police, taxicab industry, and security camera system vendors. In addition, Portland interviewed taxicab industry representatives and regulators in other cities. The City of Portland recently completed side-by-side comparative digital photograph image tests of the four principal security camera systems marketed in North America – VerifEye, Silent Witness (Honeywell), Raywood, and DDS. The tests were conducted in low light levels (to simulate night shift driving) with passengers in the back seat and following headlights. Generally, they found that the image quality in low light levels was poor – the original image is often too small to show detail, images are frequently too dark, there is poor contrast, images are not sharp and many appear grainy. In some images it was difficult to determine whether the passenger was male or female or see any detail on facial hair, haircuts, hats, etc. Viewing software provides some ability for image enhancement (e.g., brightness, contrast, sharpness, noise) that helps but there may be a question about whether the enhancements affect the use of the images as evidence in criminal prosecutions. Most of the viewing software was considered difficult and time consuming to use. The manufacturer with the best viewing software was not the manufacturer with the best image quality.

The philosophy followed in Portland is that there is not one answer to the problems of taxicab driver protection. Instead, there are three aspects:

- Apprehension and prosecution of the attacker.
- Deterrence of the attacker
- Rescue of the taxicab driver under attack

Images from security camera systems can assist with apprehension and prosecution of persons who attack taxicab drivers. The camera angle is not a factor in taxicabs, as it often is in banks and convenience stores, because the camera is installed head-height at the rear view mirror so that images of faces are not obstructed by hats. Prominent warning signs inform passengers that security cameras are photographing them and this helps provide some deterrence to crimes against drivers. Cameras won't rescue a driver from attack but GPS systems, in combination with silent alarms, alert dispatchers so that they can contact police with an exact location. In Portland, the silent alarm also activates flashing top lights to alert police that there is a crime in progress.

In the event of a crime against a taxi driver, the police will download the digital photos to their laptops and seize the camera memory from the access point in the trunk of the taxicab. Security cameras are not required in town cars in Portland because the threat of violent crime against these drivers of is considered low.

CASE HISTORY: SAN FRANCISCO

Taxicabs: 1,381 Drivers: 7,000

The San Francisco Taxi Commission passed Rule 5.C.34 that required all 1,381 taxicabs to install security camera systems by July 2003. Approximately 90% of the taxicabs opted for The

Silent Witness/Honeywell product and the other 10% purchased VerifEye and Raywood [no DDS security camera systems]. The Taxi Commission adopted security camera system technical specifications used in Toronto. Some changes in taxicab crime trends are already evident.

YEAR		ROBBERIES	ASSAULTS	TOTAL CRIMES
2000		17	5	22
2001		17	3	20
2002		25	5	30
2003		21	4	25
2004	[Jan-May]	2	?	?

The first 12 robberies in 2003 occurred before security cameras systems had been installed. The 21 taxicab robberies in 2003 are insignificant compared with approximately 3,100 total robberies in San Francisco that same year. There have not been any shooting deaths involving taxicab drivers for a few years.

In 2003, the taxicab robbery clearance (arrest) rate was approximately 50% (arrests in 10 of 21 robberies reported). It is believed that security cameras helped with the arrests in 6 of the 10 crimes that resulted in an arrest. Even if the camera images on crime information bulletins didn't lead to identification or arrest of the suspect, the camera evidence is considered helpful in prosecution.

The city chose to require security camera systems – even in the few taxicabs equipped with safety shields – because cameras are believed to prevent crimes indirectly through prominent signs that work as a deterrent. Also, cameras are an investigative tool that helps catch suspects sooner. This is especially important because taxicab robberies tend to be a serial rather than a random crime and the robbers can be caught with photos after the first few crimes thereby preventing further robberies. It is not believed that security cameras will deter assaults because these crimes generally occur outside the taxicab. The San Francisco police believe that the image quality of the various camera systems are all about the same and they are satisfactory.

Approximately one-third of San Francisco taxicabs have GPS systems installed by the taxicab companies. Taxicab drivers were opposed to safety shields. They disliked the psychological barrier between the driver and passenger that worked against tips and hindered communication. This was particularly important since San Francisco has an important tourist industry.

All taxicab companies were required to purchase security camera systems. The cost of each system was approximately $600-$700 installed. This wasn't a financial hardship because medallion owners earn considerable revenue. For example, Yellow Cab, the largest taxicab company with 500 affiliated taxicabs, pays the medallion owners approximately $1,800 each month and pays all costs (vehicle, insurance, maintenance, etc.). Yellow Cab leases each taxicab up to 60 shifts for an average of $91.50/shift (the "gate" cap) or approximately $5,000 per month. Drivers can earn anywhere from $15,000 to $50,000 annually depending on hours worked and their skill as taxicab drivers. Taxicab companies in San Francisco pay into state workers' compensation for drivers but companies are not employers except for the purpose of workers' compensation. The taximeter rate in San Francisco was raised in January 2003 to $2.85

drop, $0.45 per 1/5 mile ($2.25 per mile) and $0.45 per minute but the rate hike planned for a while and was not specifically linked to the purchase of safety equipment.

San Francisco has a 4-year maximum age limit on new vehicles placed in service as taxicabs. A used vehicle up to 4 years old with fewer than 60,000 miles can be placed in service for 3 years. Normally taxicab companies buy used Ford Crown Victoria sedans with under 30,000 miles at auction for approximately $10,000-$12,000. There are 15-20 new London taxis in service. They are allowed 7-year age limits because they cost approximately $50,000. San Francisco allows full body wrap advertisements (except on windows) which earns London taxi owners a credit of $500-$600 per month and helps make them cost competitive.

There are operational problems with security camera systems. Some drivers, afraid of being spied on by taxicab companies, have covered up the cameras so they can't take photographs. Suspects can stand outside the taxicabs at the driver side window and commit a crime without being photographed. Also, drivers are sometimes robbed while outside taxicabs.

The crime scene teams from the San Francisco Police Department will seize the memory chip (they cost approximately $35) from a taxicab security camera system when they collect other evidence. The camera vendors were required to provide camera software and security codes to SFPD and not the taxicab companies for privacy concerns. Only SFPD has access to the camera memory and it is used only for investigating major crimes by Department policy.

CASE HISTORY: WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Taxicabs: 455 Drivers: 1,600

The Taxicab Board for the province of Manitoba required all 455 standard taxicabs and accessible taxicabs to install security cameras [Honeywell/Silent Witness - $650] by July 1, 2002 and safety half-shields [$300] by January 8, 2003. These requirements were established after a driver homicide in 2001 – the fifth in a decade. To help reimburse taxicab owners for these costs, a $.25 (Can.$) surcharge was authorized for up to 3 years and it was incorporated in a temporary increase of the drop charge which was raised to $2.95 (incl. first 87 m.) beginning on December 7, 2001. The surcharge was removed in August 2003 because the safety equipment was paid for but the drop was increased as part of a general taximeter rate increase to $2.95 remaining unchanged.

The safety equipment was not required for 56 limousines and handicap vans (paratransit, wheelchair only, door-to-door service). Other safety requirements included rooftop "spike lights" on the toplight that flash during an emergency alerting police, first aid kit (no first aid training for drivers because of liability), and a mandatory training seminar to inform drivers about how the security cameras systems operate.

Most of the taxicabs in Winnipeg have owner-drivers. Second shift drivers usually split revenue 50-50 with the owner. Owners and drivers were surveyed in 2003 – after the equipment had been in service for a short while, and the results were mixed. The survey showed that the perception of the effectiveness of safety equipment was: cameras (83.6%), safety half-shields

(19.5%), GPS (71.9%), and emergency roof light (56.6%). The effectiveness of the half shield was doubted but no owners installed inexpensive side shields ($50) to better protect drivers.

Regulators in Winnipeg report a dramatic drop in taxicab robberies from 28 in 2001 to 8 in 2002. They expect full year statistics for 2003 to be available soon.

CASE HISTORY: LAS VEGAS

Taxicabs: 1,900 Drivers: 5,200

The State of Nevada regulates the taxicab industry in Nevada except that the Clark County Taxi Authority regulates the taxicab industry in Las Vegas and adjacent areas. Unlike most states, taxicab drivers are employees in Nevada. Typically, drivers keep 40% of taximeter fares and the company takes 60%. The taximeter rate is $3.00 drop, $1.80 per mile ($0.20 per 1/9 mile) and $22 per hour. A temporary $0.20 fuel surcharge adopted in 2003 became a permanent rate increase in 2004 when the drop was raised from $2.80 to $3.00.

In Las Vegas, there was one taxicab driver murdered in 2003 and 1999. During 2003, there were 67 taxicab assaults and robberies. The police made 17 arrests for taxicab assaults and robberies. Approximately, half of the 8-hour new driver training course is devoted to taxicab driver personal safety. All drivers are required to complete a 1-hour driver personal safety refresher training annually at license renewal.

The Clark County Taxi Authority surveyed taxicab drivers and 60% indicated that they want security cameras to be installed in all taxicabs. Drivers are opposed to safety partitions. Taxicab companies have opposed a proposed requirement to install security cameras and, instead, proposed that they would fund a study by the University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV). The taxicab companies also want a guarantee that the taximeter rate will be increased to offset the cost of safety equipment.

CASE HISTORY: VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Taxicabs: 448 Drivers: 1,100

All companies are required to install security cameras in taxicabs in Vancouver, BC by February 28, 2005. A 1-year surcharge on the flag (drop) of $0.15 has already been adopted to help offset the cost of the safety equipment. The taximeter rates are $2.56 (Can.$) [includes 7% federal goods and services tax (GST)], $0.10 per 77 meters, and $0.10 per 15.53 seconds. The requirement for security cameras in taxicabs was adopted by the provincial government.

Safety partitions were rejected because they reduced seating capacity and were "tourist unfriendly." Access to video images from the security cameras will be restricted to the police.

CASE HISTORY: HOUSTON

Taxicabs: 2,235 Drivers: 3,500

Houston does not have a provision in its taxicab ordinance requiring the installation of security cameras. However, Yellow Cab has installed security cameras in the 1,205 taxicabs that it operates there. NIOSH has consulted with Yellow Cab and the Houston Police Department for their study of security cameras which will be issued next year.

CASE HISTORY: SAN ANTONIO

Taxicabs: 758 Drivers: 1,700

San Antonio does not have a provision in its taxicab ordinance requiring the installation of security cameras. However, Yellow Checker Cab [owned by Yellow of Houston], which operates 75% of the taxicabs in that city, has installed security cameras in its taxicabs.

CASE HISTORY: SAN DIEGO

Taxicabs: 1,005 Drivers: 2,400

San Diego does not have a provision in its taxicab ordinance requiring the installation of security cameras or safety partitions but does require emergency rooftop lights (quick flashing amber).

CASE HISTORY: LOS ANGELES

Taxicabs: 2,300 Drivers: 5,000

In 1991, the City of Los Angeles required all taxicabs to install safety partitions ["shields"] except for 170 wheelchair accessible taxicabs [2% of fleet] and 10 taxicabs that are 9-passenger vans [use security cameras instead]. There are some individual exemptions for drivers with documented medical problems [e.g., bad back] also. Taxicab regulators believe that there is no question that safety partitions have reduced taxicab driver homicides. Prior to 1991, there were approximately 2 homicides each year but since 1991 there have only been a total of 3 homicides. There are no reliable statistics available on assaults or robberies before and after safety partitions were installed. Anecdotal information indicates that assaults have been reduced.

Many drivers are unhappy with safety partitions. They impede communication between the driver and passengers and drivers believe that, as a result, they reduce tips. Drivers also complain that they can't adjust the seat. Passengers complain that there is not enough foot room.

The structure of the taxicab industry in Los Angeles is similar to Seattle. In Los Angeles, there are 2,300 taxicabs in 9 companies and 8 of the companies are co-ops of owner-drivers. There are 5,000 taxicab drivers and half of them are lease drivers. The taximeter rate [2001] is $2.00 drop, $2.00 per mile [$0.20 per 1/10 mile], and $0.20 per 32 seconds wait time. There is a $38 flat rate between downtown and the airport. There is a $0.50 per trip fuel surcharge [$2.22 per gallon trigger price] which increases to $1.00 at $2.68 per gallon. The airport charges a $2.50 surcharge which is passed through to the passenger. The market value of taxicab licenses is $20,000-

$25,000. Taxicab licenses are issued under a franchise RFP for 5 years (2005) with five 1-year extensions. Six companies compete for trips downtown.

CASE HISTORY: WASHINGTON, D.C.

Taxicabs: Drivers:

Washington, D.C. requires the installation of one of three approved safety devices: security cameras, safety partitions, or a 911 light. They are considering dispatch radio as a fourth approved safety device. The taxicab driver homicide rate is low but the rate for robberies and assaults is very high.

CASE HISTORY: MINNEAPOLIS

Taxicabs: 420 Drivers:

The City of Minneapolis is amending its taxicab ordinance to require that taxicabs must have either GPS or a security camera or a safety partition. The city is still evaluating different methods to help the taxicab industry pay for the safety equipment including a $0.25 surcharge on the taximeter fare.

Currently, three companies have computer dispatch with GPS. Some taxicabs have safety partitions or security cameras. In 2003, two taxicab drivers were killed in taxicabs that had safety partitions – one was shot through the safety partition and the other was shot through the driver window. In 2004, one taxicab driver was shot (non-fatal) in a taxicab that had a security camera system.

YEAR	ROBBERIES	ASSAULTS	TOTAL CRIMES
2000	33	20	53
2001	21	21	42
2002	19	13	32
2003	13	11	24
2004 [Jan-May]	0	2	2

Approximately 74% of taxicab assaults and 79% of taxicab robberies occurred between 6:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m..

The City of Minneapolis regulates lease rates by setting a maximum of $75 per 12-hour shift. Presently, the highest lease rate charged is approximately $68. New taxicab licenses are non-transferable and 115 out of 420 taxicab licenses [70 regular, 45 wheelchair] are non-transferable.

The City of Minneapolis did some security camera testing as early as 1999. They believe that the image quality of security cameras is satisfactory for use by the police. Minneapolis adopted technical standards used by Toronto and other cities.

CASE HISTORY: BALTIMORE

Taxicabs: 1,151 Drivers: 2,500

The State of Maryland's Public Service Commission required all taxicabs in install safety partitions in 1996. Crimes of assault declined after the safety partitions were installed. A study funded by a USDOT grant in June 1999, "The Effectiveness of Taxi Partitions: The Baltimore Case," concludes that "an unshielded Baltimore taxi driver in 1991 was five times more likely to experience assaults".

YEAR	ASSAULTS	HOMICIDES
1991	203	2
1992	209	1
1993	224	1
1994	153	0
1995	131	0
1996	91	0
1997	25	2

The taxicab regulators believe that safety partitions have a significant impact on the taxicab crime rate. Some drivers complain about losing personal contact with passengers. A few have requested exemptions because they are too tall or have back problems and they can't adjust the driver seat because of the safety partition installation. Some passengers complain about poor air circulation – especially the lack of air conditioning during the summer months. Drivers tend to leave windows open in the safety partitions during the day shift and close them at night. The PSC recommends but does not require drivers to keep passengers out of the front seat.

The taxicab industry in Baltimore consists of 9 associations which are a mix of co-operatives (owner-drivers) and companies that own taxicabs. Approximately 900 taxicabs have computer dispatch and GPS. The PSC is considering an increase in the taximeter rate which is $1.50 drop, $1.20 per mile and $0.40 per minute. They recently imposed a $0.55 per trip fuel surcharge.

CASE HISTORY: MIAMI-DADE

Taxicabs: 1,966 Drivers: 4,000

Miami-Dade does not have a requirement for either safety partitions or security camera systems. They are studying the driver safety issue.

TAXICAB SAFETY STRATEGIES IN OTHER LARGE CITIES

There are five safety strategies implemented in large North American cities: (1) security camera systems ONLY [San Francisco, CA, Portland, OR, Vancouver, BC,] , (2) bullet-resistant safety partitions ONLY [Los Angeles, CA, New York, NY, Baltimore, MD], (3) EITHER security camera systems OR bullet-resistant safety partitions [Minneapolis, MN, Washington, DC], (4) BOTH security camera systems AND bullet-resistant safety partitions [Winnipeg, Man.], and (5) NEITHER security camera systems NOR bullet-resistant safety partitions [San Diego, CA, Houston, TX (Yellow Cab has cameras but there is no regulatory requirement)]. There is no consensus among taxicab industry regulators about what safety strategy is best and the lack of consensus may be because there are no published studies on the effectiveness of cameras and partitions in taxicabs (except the Baltimore partition study which was inconclusive) and no cities have had digital cameras installed long enough to support a comparison of before/after crime statistics.

Many taxicab regulators in other cities visualize the taxicab driver safety issue as really three separate issues: (1) BEFORE or crime deterrence, (2) DURING or driver protection, and (3) AFTER or suspect arrest and prosecution. When viewed this way, security cameras and safety partitions cannot be compared directly because cameras are primarily useful in arrest and prosecution while partitions are primarily useful in protection the driving during an attempted robbery or assault. NIOSH, which is conducting a study of cameras in Houston taxicabs and partitions in Baltimore taxicabs, considers comparisons of the effectiveness of these two types of safety equipment similar to trying to compare "apples and oranges." It has been argued by some proponents that cameras and partitions both may be effective in crime deterrence but there is no studies that address this yet. It is necessary to precisely define the safety problem that must be solved so that a suitable safety strategy can be determined. For example, if the problem is preventing injury to drivers, then it is pretty clear that partitions will provide more physical protection to drivers than other safety equipment. Alternatively, if the problem is reducing crimes in general, then cameras may be more effective in deterring crimes or reducing pattern (serial) crimes by arresting a suspect.

There was a consensus on the Committee that the best safety strategy for the taxicab industry in Seattle would be to require security cameras ONLY [like San Francisco, CA, Portland, OR, Vancouver, BC]. This safety strategy should be reviewed when: (1) driver injury statistics are available to determine whether driver injuries [more numerous in assault crimes] are a more serious concern than robberies [associated with potentially serious or fatal injuries because of prevalence of deadly weapons] and (2) studies are available comparing the effectiveness of different safety strategies [cameras are too new for useful before/after crime statistic comparisons].

The high percentage of new drivers that are victims of crimes may mean that more emphasis on driver personal safety training would substitute, in part, for experience and help drivers to be more aware of their environment and any threats that may be present. The safety strategy in San Diego relies heavily on driver training and emergency rooftop flashing lights that the driver activates when a crime is in progress.

Portland, OR recently completed side-by-side tests of the four security camera systems marketed in North America under low light conditions (evening) and with following headlights and there were concerns about image quality. San Francisco and Minneapolis believe the image quality is adequate for law enforcement work. SPD reviewed the test images from Portland, OR and believes that most of the images are useable.

CITIES THAT HAVE TAKEN ACTION

On August 13, 2003, the Portland City Council amended their city ordinance to make it mandatory for taxicabs to have digital security cameras, global positioning systems and signage that states: YOU ARE ON CAMERA. IT IS A FELONY IN OREGON TO ASSAULT A TAXICAB DRIVER installed. This action was possible by a Private for Hire Transportation Safety Fund (Safety Fund) established by the City of Portland enabling taxicab companies to make the mandatory improvements. Funding for the Safety Fund was provided by an increase in Private for Hire Transportation Fund permit fees.

The Emergency and Protective Service Committee and Council in Ottawa, Canada amended their by-laws on August 22, 2005 to further protect taxicab drivers. Effective March 1, 2008, all taxicabs in operation at anytime must have digital security cameras and global positioning systems that has been approved by the Chief License Inspector installed in each taxicab.

The City of Los Angeles has also made it obligatory that all licensed City of Los Angeles taxicabs be installed with operable digital security system approved by the Department in order to aid law enforcement in the investigation and prosecution of crimes committed against taxi drivers. The equipment purchased by the Department in October 2006 was delivered and installed in the taxicabs in within four weeks of delivery of the digital security systems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee generally reached an agreement on requiring all City of Atlanta vehicles for hire to implement digital safety cameras. The cameras were a deterrent to would be criminals. In addition, they also provided better solvability factors for law enforcement when a crime took place. Finally, they did not require alterations to be made to the vehicles, as would be required for implementing bullet-proof shields.

APPENDICES

Seattle Taxicab Crime Statistics 2000-2004
Professional Driver Course "Customer Relations/Driver Safety"
course notes
Survey of Crimes Against Taxicab Drivers [May 2004]
Notes from Six Meetings of TAG Committee on Driver Safety

TRANSMITTAL FORM FOR LEGISLATION

TO: MAYOR'S OFFICE **ATTN: GREG PRIDGEON**

Legislative Counsel (Signature): Investigator Kurt Braunsroth

Contact Number: (404) 853-4266

Originating Department: Department of Police

Committee(s) of Purview: Public Safety and Legal Administration

Council Deadline: **13 February 2008**

Anticipated Committee Meeting Date(s): 26-27 February 2008

Anticipated Full Council Date: 3 March 2008

Commissioner Signature: D. C. [signature]

Chief Procurement Officer Signature: _____

CAPTION

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA, CHAPTER 162, VEHICLES FOR HIRE, TO PROVIDE FOR A DEFINITION OF TAXICAB SAFETY EQUIPMENT; TO REQUIRE SINAGE ON APPLICABLE TAXICABS ALERTING PASSENGERS TO THE PRESENCE OF A DIGITAL SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM; TO REQUIRE THE INSTALLATION OF TAXICAB SAFETY EQUIPMENT IN ALL TAXICABS; TO AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF OF POLICE OR HIS/HER DESIGNEE TO ESTABLISH, ISSUE, AND REVISE RULES, PROCEDURES, AND REGULATIONS TO GOVERN THE SPECIFICATIONS, INSTALLATION, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE TAXICAB SAFETY EQUIPMENT, AND TO PROVIDE FOR ENFORCEMENT OF RULES PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS; FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTING THE SAFETY OF TAXICAB DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any)

Mayor's Staff Only

Received by CPO: _____ (date) Received by LC from CPO: _____ (date)

Received by Mayor's Office: 2/14/08 (date) Reviewed by: [signature] (date)

Submitted to Council: _____ (date)